

The Life and Death of Richard the Third

[Shakespeare homepage](#) | [Richard III](#) | Act 4, Scene 2
[Previous scene](#) | [Next scene](#)

SCENE II. London. The palace.

Sennet. Enter KING RICHARD III, in pomp, crowned; BUCKINGHAM, CATESBY, a page, and others

KING RICHARD III

Stand all apart Cousin of Buckingham!

BUCKINGHAM

My gracious sovereign?

KING RICHARD III

Give me thy hand.

Here he ascendeth his throne

Thus high, by thy advice
And thy assistance, is King Richard seated;
But shall we wear these honours for a day?
Or shall they last, and we rejoice in them?

BUCKINGHAM

Still live they and for ever may they last!

KING RICHARD III

O Buckingham, now do I play the touch,
To try if thou be current gold indeed
Young Edward lives: think now what I would say.

BUCKINGHAM

Say on, my loving lord.

KING RICHARD III

Why, Buckingham, I say, I would be king,

BUCKINGHAM

Why, so you are, my thrice renowned liege.

KING RICHARD III

Ha! am I king? 'tis so: but Edward lives.

BUCKINGHAM

True, noble prince.

KING RICHARD III

O bitter consequence,
That Edward still should live! 'True, noble prince!'
Cousin, thou wert not wont to be so dull:
Shall I be plain? I wish the bastards dead;
And I would have it suddenly perform'd.
What sayest thou? speak suddenly; be brief.

BUCKINGHAM

Your grace may do your pleasure.

KING RICHARD III

Tut, tut, thou art all ice, thy kindness freezeth:
Say, have I thy consent that they shall die?

BUCKINGHAM

Give me some breath, some little pause, my lord
Before I positively herein:
I will resolve your grace immediately.

Exit

CATESBY

[Aside to a stander by]
The king is angry: see, he bites the lip.

KING RICHARD III

I will converse with iron-witted fools
And unrespective boys: none are for me
That look into me with considerate eyes:
High-reaching Buckingham grows circumspect.
Boy!

Page

My lord?

KING RICHARD III

Know'st thou not any whom corrupting gold
Would tempt unto a close exploit of death?

Page

My lord, I know a discontented gentleman,
Whose humble means match not his haughty mind:
Gold were as good as twenty orators,
And will, no doubt, tempt him to any thing.

KING RICHARD III

What is his name?

Page

His name, my lord, is Tyrrel.

KING RICHARD III

I partly know the man: go, call him hither.

Exit Page

The deep-revolving witty Buckingham
No more shall be the neighbour to my counsel:
Hath he so long held out with me untired,
And stops he now for breath?

Enter STANLEY

How now! what news with you?

STANLEY

My lord, I hear the Marquis Dorset's fled
To Richmond, in those parts beyond the sea
Where he abides.

Stands apart

KING RICHARD III

Catesby!

CATESBY

My lord?

KING RICHARD III

Rumour it abroad
That Anne, my wife, is sick and like to die:
I will take order for her keeping close.
Inquire me out some mean-born gentleman,
Whom I will marry straight to Clarence' daughter:

The boy is foolish, and I fear not him.
Look, how thou dream'st! I say again, give out
That Anne my wife is sick and like to die:
About it; for it stands me much upon,
To stop all hopes whose growth may damage me.

Exit CATESBY

I must be married to my brother's daughter,
Or else my kingdom stands on brittle glass.
Murder her brothers, and then marry her!
Uncertain way of gain! But I am in
So far in blood that sin will pluck on sin:
Tear-falling pity dwells not in this eye.

Re-enter Page, with TYRREL

Is thy name Tyrrel?

TYRREL

James Tyrrel, and your most obedient subject.

KING RICHARD III

Art thou, indeed?

TYRREL

Prove me, my gracious sovereign.

KING RICHARD III

Darest thou resolve to kill a friend of mine?

TYRREL

Ay, my lord;
But I had rather kill two enemies.

KING RICHARD III

Why, there thou hast it: two deep enemies,
Foes to my rest and my sweet sleep's disturbers
Are they that I would have thee deal upon:
Tyrrel, I mean those bastards in the Tower.

TYRREL

Let me have open means to come to them,
And soon I'll rid you from the fear of them.

KING RICHARD III

Thou sing'st sweet music. Hark, come hither, Tyrrel
Go, by this token: rise, and lend thine ear:

Whispers

There is no more but so: say it is done,
And I will love thee, and prefer thee too.

TYRREL

'Tis done, my gracious lord.

KING RICHARD III

Shall we hear from thee, Tyrrel, ere we sleep?

TYRREL

Ye shall, my Lord.

Exit

Re-enter BUCKINGHAM

BUCKINGHAM

My Lord, I have consider'd in my mind
The late demand that you did sound me in.

KING RICHARD III

Well, let that pass. Dorset is fled to Richmond.

BUCKINGHAM

I hear that news, my lord.

KING RICHARD III

Stanley, he is your wife's son well, look to it.

BUCKINGHAM

My lord, I claim your gift, my due by promise,
For which your honour and your faith is pawn'd;
The earldom of Hereford and the moveables
The which you promised I should possess.

KING RICHARD III

Stanley, look to your wife; if she convey
Letters to Richmond, you shall answer it.

BUCKINGHAM

What says your highness to my just demand?

KING RICHARD III

As I remember, Henry the Sixth
Did prophesy that Richmond should be king,
When Richmond was a little peevish boy.
A king, perhaps, perhaps,--

BUCKINGHAM

My lord!

KING RICHARD III

How chance the prophet could not at that time
Have told me, I being by, that I should kill him?

BUCKINGHAM

My lord, your promise for the earldom,--

KING RICHARD III

Richmond! When last I was at Exeter,
The mayor in courtesy show'd me the castle,
And call'd it Rougemont: at which name I started,
Because a bard of Ireland told me once
I should not live long after I saw Richmond.

BUCKINGHAM

My Lord!

KING RICHARD III

Ay, what's o'clock?

BUCKINGHAM

I am thus bold to put your grace in mind
Of what you promised me.

KING RICHARD III

Well, but what's o'clock?

BUCKINGHAM

Upon the stroke of ten.

KING RICHARD III

Well, let it strike.

BUCKINGHAM

Why let it strike?

KING RICHARD III

Because that, like a Jack, thou keep'st the stroke
Betwixt thy begging and my meditation.
I am not in the giving vein to-day.

BUCKINGHAM

Why, then resolve me whether you will or no.

KING RICHARD III

Tut, tut,
Thou troublest me; am not in the vein.

Exeunt all but BUCKINGHAM

BUCKINGHAM

Is it even so? rewards he my true service
With such deep contempt made I him king for this?
O, let me think on Hastings, and be gone
To Brecknock, while my fearful head is on!

Exit

[Shakespeare homepage](#) | [Richard III](#) | Act 4, Scene 2
[Previous scene](#) | [Next scene](#)